

STAGES:

Valuable Tools for Professionals Working to Support Students with Special Needs

Who are these professionals?

How does Stages work for them?

- **SPECIAL ED ADMINISTRATORS:**

Stages Assessment Software provides administrators with provisions for alternative assessment as mandated in the reauthorized IDEA Act (Individuals with Disabilities Education). These Federal regulations specifically require that a variety of services be considered, including professional development for their district service providers who will be called on to support the implementation of assistive technology. Stages Curriculum and Alternative Assessment Workshops provide a structure for such professional development.

- **PRINCIPALS:**

Stages offers principals a set of tools to put in the hands of the specialists and therapists working to support special needs students who are unable to experience success given traditional, standardized curriculum materials, methodologies, and assessment practices. Administrative responsibility for reporting out on student outcomes and performance levels is facilitated by the collection of detailed personal data generated by the Stages assessment software. Finally, *Implementing IDEA: A Guide for Principals* (March, 2001), states the following:

- principals should be aware that each public agency is responsible for ensuring that assistive technology devices and services are made available to students if required
- principals must ensure that children with special needs have the necessary level of support and materials to ensure equal access to the general curriculum
- principals must be aware of the purpose and use of various assessment modifications and alternate assessments that might be used for children with special needs

- **SPECIAL ED TEACHERS and INCLUSION SPECIALISTS:**
Stages equips Special Education teachers and Inclusion Specialists with a competency-based observation approach to assessment. Student performance data collected during the assessment process reveals exactly what a learner can do and makes it possible to design curriculum modification tailored to accommodate individual needs and learning style preferences. Sample IEP objectives contained in the Stages book provide a framework for including individual Assessment results and Competency goals in the IEP.
- **SPEECH/LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS:**
Stages assessment results assist Speech and Language pathologists in evaluating key facets of language development and identifying target skills which the learner will work to achieve.
- **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY COORDINATORS:**
Stages gives A.T. Coordinators a comprehensive collection of resources to serve as the foundation for conducting assistive technology evaluations and making recommendations for specialized hardware, software, and support services.
- **TECHNOLOGY and CURRICULUM SPECIALISTS:**
Stages software charts provide Technology and Curriculum specialists with a rich resource for the selection of specific software titles to purchase that have proven value in supporting practice and skill acquisition in learners at different stages of cognitive and language development.
- **REGULAR EDUCATION CLASSROOM TEACHERS:**
Stages resources contained within the book include lists of *Observable Characteristics* of learners at each stage, which can provide teachers with a quick and easy means of determining a learner's status on the Stages continuum, simply by observing specific behavior. The accompanying lists of *Competency Goals* serve as an informal measure of a learner's progress within a set of skills. These "no tech" tools equip teachers with information to share with parents and others regarding a learner's functioning and progress along this continuum of development. The extensive software selection charts provide a solid foundation for choosing software titles that will support teachers and their students working in a differentiated instructional model.
- **SPECIAL ED PARAPROFESSIONALS:**
Stages provides Special Ed paraprofessionals with a resource guide complete with an overview of each stage and a valuable collection of *Extension Activities* suggesting ways to extend and solidify learning through play, songs, and other off computer activities. These activities, along with the recommended software, allow aides to be more independent in supporting all learners in meaningful practice and skill development activities, regardless of the setting.